415 "The best pieces of equipment of which they can boast are
923 some small vessels of "palo santo" [lignum vital—a kind of wood--Tramlator] and a few small clay pots with very narrow mouths and two little handles which serve them as water flasks on their frequent raiding forays."

"Men and women alike shave their heads completely. They
302 use, for that purpose, the sharp jaw of a certain fish, and their own teeth serve them to pare their nails. They cover themselves as best
291 they are able from their waists to their knees. The men, on gala
286 occasions, often wear a sort of sleeveless jacket and hang a kind of
415 bag from one shoulder in which they keep a crude wooden pipe, fire
[276] making equipment and other nicknacks. Both the bag and the coat are knitted, made from agave or chaguar fiber, and curiously marked.
302 They pull out their beards, eyelashes and eyebrows, and either to improve their looks or in order to appear more terrible in battle, they blacken their faces and chests with coal dust."

"Their favorite food is fish, and lacking this, all kinds of wild
262 fruits or roots other than the poisonous ones. Their principal vegetable food, on which they can count for a quarter of each year and which they store to some small extent, is the fruit of the algarrobo, chañar and mistol. They also eat, and that without repugnance, lizards, locusts, crickets [593], mice, and even eggs after they have been abandoned, together with other filth. They eat fish and any other kind of meat
[252] or roots, roasted or boiled, and know of no other way of preparing food.
[264] They can withstand hunger admirably, and when they are unable to get other food they spend their time lying about chewing some herb or leaf from the forest."

"From the algarroba [pod which grows on the algarrobo tree--
273 Tramlator] they make a beverage which is extremely delicious to their
579 taste and which intoxicates them and makes them very fierce. Their drunken parties almost always end in a fierce fight which would have dire results were it not that the women, who never drink of that liquor, are careful to hide the arrows and all other offensive weapons and to hold back and separate those engaged in fighting."

"When the algarroba starts to turn yellow, they place in a cen-
533 ● 222 tral place among the huts, the pimpin, which is a log, concave at its upper end, covered with a piece of hide. A drummer with a belt about

533 his waist from which hang a number of shells, claws, little horns,
● 222 teeth and similar trifles, beats on that rustic drum day and night without ceasing and, with the continous movement of his body, makes the trinkets about his waist rattle all this accompanied by a song or rather a lugubrious and high-pitched shouting which can be heard at a great distance. This ridiculous performance is not a simple demonstration of rejoining but rather, in their opinion, a rite necessary to hasten the ripening of the longed for and beneficent fruit."

"When a woman arrives from the forest laden with fruit, roots
222 262 or other eatables, all the other women of the village crowd to her hut and she, after having set aside enough for the suttenance of her family, distributes the rest, the other women not saying a word of
[626] showing any sign of appreciation. Were she to refrain from giving away her surplus, it would cause the greatest displeasure, and might even provoke some dangerous quarrel."

"The Mataguayos are timid and cowardly, but vengeful in
181 the extreme. They never forget an offense--sooner or later they will
[671] be avenged. The law of requital is unbreakable for them. They avoid making war when this is possible, but if they are attacked they
[411] defend themselves. Their most common weapon is the arrow."

"They recognize no authority and no law. The child obeys
593 its parents if it wishes to and the latter, though they may love their children, have no power at all over them. Nevertheless one does not generally encounter lack of respect toward the old or toward the unfortunate." [594]

"The men busy themselves with fishing and only very rarely
462 indulge in hunting. Their agricultural activities are limited to the
[241] sowing of a few clumps of pumpkins and watermelons. With the
[289] juice of the latter they make aloja. Some of them also devote their time to making thin ropes of agave fiber with which they construct their nets."

"All other work is done by the women. She must not only prepare the food but also fetch fruit and roots from the forest; not only bring water but also chop firewood; not only look after the cleanliness of the hut but also make it. In one word: she is a slave."

"When a girl reaches nubility she is hidden in a corner of the
881 hut and covered with fronds and rags. It is illicit for her to speak to anybody or taste meat or fish for a determined length of time. Meanwhile a drummer goes through the same ceremony in front of her

273 when the drink excites them too much and infuriates them. In this
579 way many wounds and deaths are avoided, yet in spite of it they are frequent."

273 "The fruit which they most commonly use to make their brews
221 is the algarrobo pod, which is quite sweet and nutritious and probably the most abundant fruit in those regions. When the season for this fruit is in the offing it would seem that new life, happiness and pleasure are born, and the Indians prepare for it by putting on a show to get everyone to make ready for the coming of the happy and much sighed for season."

222 "To this effect, when the pods of the algarrobo start to turn
535 yellow they place a wooden mortar in front of their dwellings, and
789 cover it with a half tanned sheep skin or the skin of some other animal. One of them, with a piece of cord or leather thong bound about his waist from which hang a number of shells, horns and small bones, and other things which will make a little noise, starts [601] to pound with a small stick on the mortar, which they call pimpin and which takes the place of a drum. This drummer accompanies the blows dealt to the pimpin with divers body movements, half dancing but rooted to the spot, in such a manner that the objects which hang from his waist make a tambourine-like sound, something like the rattling of empty nutshells; singing meanwhile out loud but in a sad monotonous way—one would say that they fear some great calamity or are asking for help in a grim battle. The fact of the matter is that day and night, without ceasing, the low hollow sounds of the pimpin must be made, together with the rattling of the wild tambourine and the shouts or lamentations of the sorrowful singer—and all this they say is to bring about the quicker and better ripening of the desired fruit. That is why, when the singer-musician tires, another immediately replaces him.

342 "The houses of the Matacos are altogether too small and uncomfortable, but they make them so on purpose for they are thus able to husband time and fatigue, preferring ease in building to living comfort. They cut a couple of saplings or thin branches, bend them and stick the ends into the ground in the form of two crossed arches, tie a few handsful of straw to them and the house is finished. The entrance is low and narrow and one must enter on all fours. The appearance of the hut is that of an oven two or three yards in diameter. If the cutting of a few boughs looms difficult to them, then they cut several canes,

leather bracelet, which they continue to wear until, it is said, they give it to the first man who wins their favor. They knit shirts out of twine or in double thickness, very closely knit and yet elastic, which look like coats of mail and have no sleeves, and are garnished in various patterns with pieces of clam shell. These shirts are particularly useful [181] in their fights and as protection against the thorns of the forest, but the Indians have only a few of them.

Other ornaments are made of feathers, especially of the ostrich [rhea--Translator], with which the women deck their foreheads, waists, shoulders, wrists and ankles. The men put on much the same gear when they are about to fight, go to feasts or to treat a sick person, as will later be shown.

The women themselves also weave the wool gathered from the few sheep they possess and arrange the natural wool colors in regular patterns of stripes or squares. They do not know how to make more ornamental figures.

In order to weave they stick four forked pieces of wood into the ground in the form of a rectangle, place a pole across each end to which they affix the warp threads and with a wooden blade about a hand breadth long thread and tamp the wool into place.

They call "weaving" potzin; the "loom" noccaléi, and the "threads" huoléi. These words, which have not the least affinity with the corresponding Spanish words, assure us that the Indians did not learn weaving from the Spaniards -- not that one should lay great stock either by similarities or by the lack of them in words to buttress a judgment of this nature (on the contrary, it happens that the Mataco always do all they can to keep from adopting foreign words to express new things, preferring to use their own words with small changes) but the fact of the matter is that we are not here confronted by one of these circumlocutions. Another possible cause for error might be found in the great difficulty which they have to pronounce words as we do. Furthermore there is the habit of taking Spanish words and modifying them to suit their own language as when they make from "cabra" [goat--Translator] caila, and from Pedro, Peiló.

All work having to do with carrying, making tents, making pots, cooking, weaving, looking for roots and making nets, is women's work. Hunting, fishing, the making of weapons, warring, are men's business. Looking for honey in the forests, where it is abundant, and collecting fruit are activities common to both sexes. I suppose that

this shared work has its cause in that the last two mentioned products must necessarily be gathered within a certain limited period and therefore the Indians have need of the combined effort of all the workers they can muster in order to harvest all they possibly can. 222 462

For the making of nets they must first, naturally, begin by making twine, which they call niñ'hiôi. They get their textile material from a bromelia which in Quechua is called châguar (a name now also used by the white settlers) and in Mataco hûié. They steep the leaves of this plant in water for a time and then comb them with a clam shell. Once this has been done the residue is put out into the sun to dry and whiten. The last stage is that of twisting the fiber -- a wad of it is held in the left hand and rubbed back and forth [182] on a leg, upon which they sprinkle a little gypsum in order to avoid getting hurt. This gypsum powder is called maccotâc-muc. 283

The twine being thus ready they make not only nets with it but also ropes, which they call niñ'hioi-less, which means family or skein of threads.

Some of the Indians have special skill in making weapons, and make them as a means of barter with their companions. They use a very hard wood for the bow, and ostrich [rhea--Translator] tendons or strips of hide for the string. The arrow shaft is made of cane, the head of some hard wood, often tipped with bone and barbed like a fish hook. 411

Chapter V

Marriage Customs

Those who do not know anything about the Indians may believe that they lead morally and materially sterile lives. Yet this is not actually the case: the savage loves, hates and knows what ambition, enjoyments, dangers and glory are. He is acquainted with religion and with fear. In these primitive societies the whole gamut of human affections is experienced precisely "as among the whites," as Faustino used to say to me when I asked him about the intimate experiences of the Indian way of life. 152

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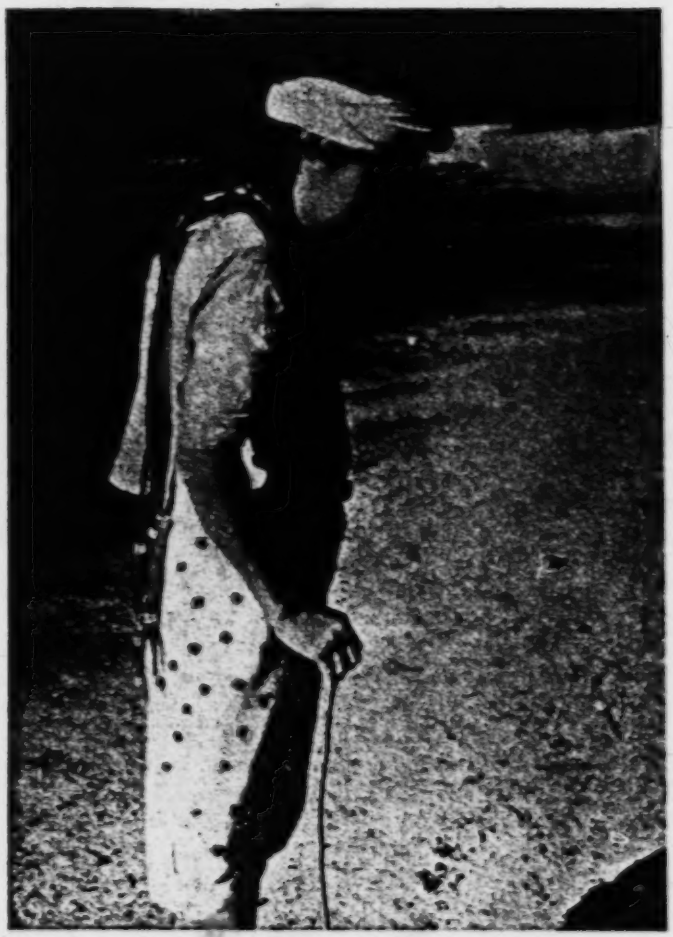

Fig. 1.—Ready and eager for love this Mataco girl carries the red woollen string with bead-tassels on her back. Phot. Fock.

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son-in-law will be awakened by the girl's father and be given orders to go out and fish or hunt. Should he be unfortunate and return empty-handed, he can count on being sent home to his parents the same afternoon, and the connexion is broken. If, on the other hand, the young man has any luck he is allowed to continue with the girl for the time being. A day or so later he will take her out with him to search for food. He will, for example hunt and look for honey, and she will collect *cavagnatá* leaves. They go a long way, and she tries to fill the *yica*,

[222]
[415]

/319 cont./

433 They do not work, plant, or do anything similar; they
222 are but mediocre fishermen and barely hunters. To live they
241 lay up great stocks of chañar, algarrobas, and mistol fruits, and with some gourd seeds placed under the earth they have extraordinary harvests if the year is moderately rainy.

786 They organize their orgies when the algarrobas, chañar,
578 and mistol are in season, and then the quarrels and murders occur
682 among the men; these crimes go unpunished by the authorities, for there are none. But if the one who has perished had relatives they will take revenge.

342 /320/ They do not bother to build houses or such things.
513 They make a kind of oven; for it they bend some branches of small trees, fix them to the ground, cover these branches with straw or grass, and they sleep underneath in a pile in the company of their dogs.

164 This is the reason for the excessive mange which kills
515 them and makes them look so disgusting, since they are not at all partisans of the daily bath, as the Chiriguano are, and when they do bathe, they roll about in the river sand or in the ashes of their oven-houses.

584 They do not seek the consent of their parents for marriage
585 nor do they have ceremonies. Do two young persons, a man and a woman, love each other? They leave the common settlement, go to the woods, stay a few weeks, and then return, now married, to live with their in-laws or to make another oven like the one of their elders.

586 Young people divorce each other easily, but they are
152 more constant than the Chiriguano in married life. Nonetheless,
837 the women are very jealous and do not readily consent to their
593 husbands' being with other women; for this reason they keep them content with the work of bringing them much fruit from the forest and caressing them.

302 Men and women cut their hair; some of them stain their
301 faces and pierce their ear lobs, in which they put a piece of wood, like the Toba, but this is not a distinctive mark of the race.